

AVENUE OF HONOUR



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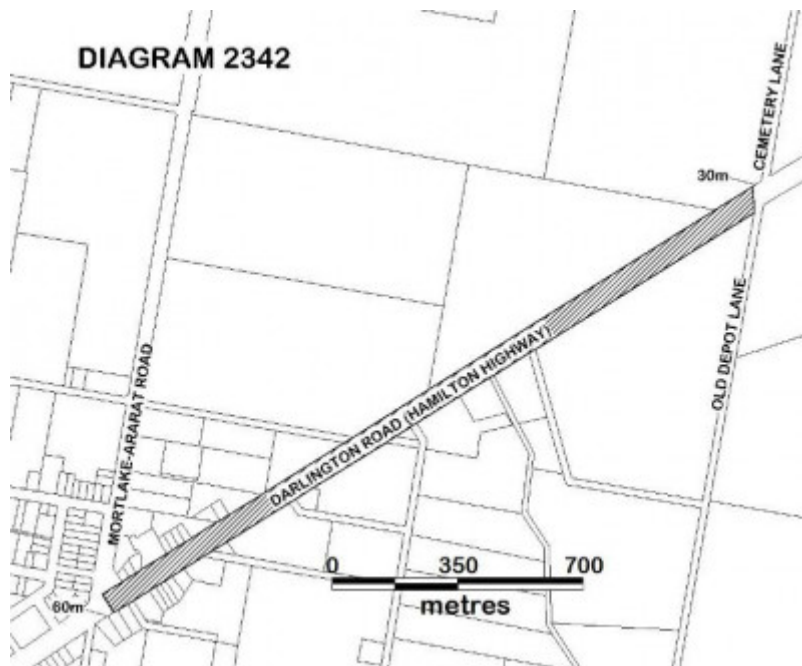


Diagram 2342

Location

HAMILTON HIGHWAY MORTLAKE, MOYNE SHIRE

Municipality

MOYNE SHIRE

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2342

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO76

VHR Registration

April 9, 2015

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake which comprises a section of the Hamilton Highway (Darlington Road) and 191 Monterey Cypress trees (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa* formerly known as *Cupressus macrocarpa*) which line both sides between the Ararat-Mortlake Road and Cemetery Lane, and associated name plaques.

History Summary

Since the early 1900s, commemorative avenues of trees have been planted in Australia and internationally to honour those who have served in wartime. During and after World War I avenues of honour were particularly popular in Victoria with some 218 memorial avenues planted throughout the state. Victoria has the largest number of avenues of honour of any state or territory in Australia. The planting of the Avenue of Honour, Mortlake took place on 5 August 1919 to commemorate those of the district who served in World War I. Large numbers of people attended the first official planting and Councillor T Montgomery delivered a speech in which he thanked the community, the Mortlake Progress Association and the Shire Council for the work done in planning the Avenue of Honour. A large number of relatives and friends of returned soldiers, and soldiers themselves, were in attendance and together they planted 85 trees for a number of those who enlisted. The first 31 trees were planted in memory of those who lost their lives. The avenue was planted on the outskirts of the town of Mortlake, commencing at the Ararat-Mortlake Road and extending for about one kilometre towards what was known as Balls Cutting (now Pound Lane). A record of names and associated trees was kept to enable name plaques to be placed on the tree guards. It was noted at the time of planting that at least another 50 trees were required to commemorate every man who enlisted from the town and a number appear to have been planted over the following years. Further planting appears to have taken place after World War II, extending the avenue further. Name plaques from the World War I planting were replaced in 2011 and the original plaques were offered to families of those commemorated. The remainder are held at the RSL in Mortlake.

Description Summary

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is an avenue of 191 Monterey Cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa* formerly known as *Cupressus macrocarpa*) trees. This species had been grown extensively to form wind breaks in the Western District from the 1870s. Planted on the Hamilton Highway, the avenue begins at the Ararat-Mortlake Road, to the north-east of the township of Mortlake, and runs approximately 2.2 kilometres to Cemetery Lane. There are 99 trees on the northern side, and 92 trees on the southern side. The original planting of 85 trees commenced at the Mortlake end and this was initially extended to approximately 146 trees. Another phase of planting increased the avenue to approximately 196 trees at its greatest extent and it is now contains 191 trees. The type of tree forms a dense, dark avenue of large trees which are evenly spaced along the avenue. Recent granite name plaques identifying individual soldiers are placed at the foot of trees.

This site is part of the traditional land of the Kulin Nation.

How is it significant?

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is of historical and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history

Criterion E Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

Why is it significant?

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is significant at the State level for the following reasons:

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is historically significant for exemplifying rural Victoria's reaction to both World War I and II. It is significant as a fine example of this important form of memorial planting in Victoria which commemorated individual sacrifice during both wars, which is rare in Victoria. It is representative of many plantings that appeared in Australia, particularly during World War I, commemorating all those who enlisted for service in an egalitarian form where each individual, regardless of rank, was equally recognised for their service. [Criterion A]

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is aesthetically significant as an outstanding planting of 191 Monterey Cypress which is an extensive, largely intact and highly distinctive commemorative planting. The uniform planting of densely foliated trees on both sides of the road produces a dramatic and continuous avenue along the north-eastern approach into the town of Mortlake, which contrasts markedly with the pastoral surroundings. The avenue is an impressive and imposing visual and cultural landmark and a key landscape feature of the district. [Criterion E]

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is also significant for the following reasons, but not at the State level:

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is socially significant at a local level for its relationship with the community as a memorial to those who served in World War I and for its continuing commemorative importance. It remains as an indication of the involvement of Victoria's small communities in commemorating the sacrifices of their volunteers,

along with the loss and sorrow experienced in small rural areas such as the Mortlake district.

Permit Exemptions

PERMIT EXEMPTIONS

It should be noted that Permit Exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under s.42(4) of the Heritage Act). Permit Exemptions can also be applied for and granted after registration (under s.66 of the Heritage Act).

General Condition: 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.

General Condition: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible.

General Condition: 3. All works should be informed by a Conservation or Tree Management Plan prepared for the place.

General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Heritage Council from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

General Condition: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the relevant responsible authority, where applicable.

Vegetation Exemptions:

Removal of dead or dangerous trees and emergency tree works to maintain public safety and to protect buildings and structures providing the Executive Director is notified within 21 days of the removal or works occurring.

Management and maintenance of trees, including formative and remedial pruning, removal of deadwood, pest and disease control, cabling, mowing, weed control and mulching.

In the event of loss or removal of trees, replanting with Monterey Cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa* formerly known as *Cupressus macrocarpa*) trees.

Removal of tree seedlings and suckers but excluding herbicide use.

Management of trees in accordance with Australian Standard; Pruning of amenity trees AS 4373.

Management of trees in accordance with Australian Standard; Protection of trees on development sites AS 4970.

Removal of plants listed as prohibited and controlled weeds in the *Catchment and Land Protection Act* 1994.

Hard Element Exemptions:

Repair, maintenance, replacement and removal of existing structures and hard landscape elements such as driveways and crossovers, stone and concrete edging, fences and gates.

All road and pavement works to the Hamilton Highway (Darlington Road) and any intersecting road within the extent of registration from shoulder to shoulder.

Traffic management and safety works including removal and installation of traffic and directional signs, reflector posts, and line marking.

Minor repair, maintenance and conservation by a qualified conservator to memorial name plaques in a manner which preserves the cultural heritage significance of the place.

Theme

8. Building community life

Construction dates	1919,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	196490
Property Number	

History

HISTORY

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

Since the early 1900s, commemorative avenues of trees have been planted in Australia and internationally to honour those who have served in wartime. Becoming commonly known as 'avenues of honour', they were first planted in Victoria at Horsham and Apsley to the west of the state in 1902, to commemorate soldiers who fought in the Boer War. During and after World War I, avenues of honour were particularly popular in Victoria with some 218 memorial avenues planted throughout the state. Victoria has the largest number of avenues of honour of any state or

territory in Australia.

From the 1850s, there was a civic movement in Australia to create parks, gardens and tree-lined streets in order to beautify and improve the amenity of towns. This was strengthened with the introduction of Arbour Day in Australia in 1889, a day when coordinated tree plantings took place in local communities. These days were very popular in rural communities and local school children were often involved in the plantings. Tree plantings of a commemorative nature also took place in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Trees were often planted in public spaces by both local and visiting dignitaries at official ceremonies to commemorate special occasions such as royal events and the opening of new buildings. From the mid-nineteenth century, royal tours to Australia often included the planting of commemorative trees.

Commemorative tree plantings also took place in the nineteenth century and twentieth centuries in Australia. Trees were often planted in public spaces by both local and visiting dignitaries at official ceremonies to commemorate special occasions such as royal events and the opening of new buildings. From the mid-nineteenth century, royal tours to Australia often included the planting of commemorative trees.

World War I had an immense impact on Australia, more than any other event since British settlement, with over 200,000 Australians killed or injured in just four years. This tragedy pervaded all communities and resulted in commemoration in a number of different ways. This included honour boards, war memorial statues and monuments and the planting of trees to form an avenue of honour, with each tree planted to commemorate a person who served, no matter their rank. Considered a symbol of hope for the future, trees had the additional benefit of beautifying towns and the surrounding countryside, particularly in Australia where the landscape was regarded as being largely undeveloped. The majority of avenues of honour were planted along major roads where they received maximum public exposure and their distinctive form became important aesthetic elements along the main roads of small towns in country Victoria. A range of different tree species were used, more commonly exotic species such as elms, oaks and cypress, and occasionally native species such as eucalypts.

Unlike most types of memorials, the planting of a commemorative avenue of trees enabled entire communities to become involved in commemorating those involved in the war. This was encouraged by an official initiative from the State Recruiting Committee of Victoria, which wrote to all municipalities and shires in 1917 recommending that an assurance should be given to every intending recruit that 'his name will be memorialised in an Avenue of Honour'. As a result Victoria became the heartland of such avenues as they were promoted early and strongly, and a total of some 218 avenues were planted to commemorate World War I in Victoria.

The first avenue of honour identified in Victoria to commemorate World War I was planted at Eurack (VHR H2101) in the Western District of the state in May 1916. This was a single row of twenty Dutch elms with white crosses containing name plaques placed at the foot of each tree. The largest avenue was planted at Ballarat (VHR H2089) from 1917 to 1919. This avenue comprised over 3000 trees of various species which were planted to commemorate the soldiers and some nurses from the district who served their country. This avenue appeared to influence other communities in the surrounding districts to plant similar avenues.

The avenues were symbols of a national cause of commemoration but also allowed individual communities to express their local identity and independence. Together with honour boards, this form of memorial allowed communities to create immediate memorials, and avenues preceded the erection of war-related monuments and statues, often by a significant number of years. A high level of community participation was generally required for both raising funds and planting the trees. Trees were often donated and planted by voluntary labour and as part of a local civic ceremony. The local council and progress association were often the instigators of the projects and many meetings included discussions to determine the location of the avenue, the tree type, the form of tree guard and the provision, type and arrangement of name plaques. Local councils often contributed financially to the avenue and frequently the community was also asked to contribute. Once the location was decided, numerous working bees were held to prepare for the final planting of the trees. The local Red Cross societies were involved in providing refreshments for these occasions.

Commemoration after World War II was more commonly utilitarian, with the building of memorial halls and swimming pools and the planting of gardens in Victoria. Avenues of Honour declined in popularity however some existing avenues were extended after the war and a small number of avenues were planted. The latter included the Calder Woodburn Memorial Avenue (VHR H1975) which was planted along the Goulburn Valley Highway between 1945 and 1949 by Mr J L F Woodburn as a memorial to his son Calder and other local servicemen who did not return from the war. It comprised a total planting of 2,457 Australian native trees. A very small number of commemorative avenues were planted in association with later wars such as the Vietnam War.

In total, over 300 avenues of honour were planted in Victoria to commemorate service personnel in the twentieth century. The majority of these, approximately 218, were planted as World War I memorials between 1917 and 1921. This compares with significantly fewer avenues in other Australian states, with well less than this number planted in the other states combined.

HISTORY OF PLACE

The planning of an avenue of honour for Mortlake was clearly recorded in the *Mortlake Dispatch* on 1 August 1919 with the official planting and opening ceremony planned for 5 August that year. The Mortlake Progress Association was responsible for the planning of the memorial avenue to the soldiers from the district along the selected site on the Darlington Road, running

north-east from the township of Mortlake. With the help and cooperation of the Council nearly 100 trees were acquired for the avenue and the ground was prepared and tree guards constructed under the supervision of the Progress Association.

A request was made for the closure of shops on the afternoon of the planting and relatives and friends of the soldiers, and the returned soldiers themselves, were invited to attend and to plant their allocated tree. All plantings were tabulated so, at a later date, individual name plates could be made. It was intended that these would initially be placed on the guard of each tree, and later removed to the trunk.

The following week the *Mortlake Dispatch*, 6 August 1919, reported the opening of the Avenue of Honour as follows:

To perpetuate the memory of those brave young men from Mortlake who made the supreme sacrifice, and also those who responded to the clarion call of the Mother country, an avenue of honour has been established commencing from Montgomery's Corner on the Darlington Road and extending as far as Ball's Cutting, on both sides of the road. Planting was carried out last Tuesday and altogether 85 trees were planted. To complete the avenue another 50 trees at least are required so every man who enlisted from the town may be represented.

There was a large gathering present when Councillor T Montgomery delivered a short but inspiring address. He congratulated the people generally, the Progress Association and the Shire Council.

The first trees planted would be in memory of the honoured dead. Those trees would always be held in sacred memory by the relatives, who will tend and care for the trees in the years that were to follow.

.....The first tree would be planted in memory of Private Wilfred McDonald, who was the first soldier to give his life for the empire. The first 31 trees would represent the fallen and would be planted by relatives. In all 84 [85] trees were planted, and the matter of continuing the avenue to include all names of those who enlisted is under consideration for the near future.

In the Western District, pines and Cypress had been used extensively since the 1870s to form wind breaks, and so were natural choices for avenues of honour in that area. Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) trees were selected to form the Avenue of Honour at Mortlake. The availability and proven hardiness and longevity of the species presumably influenced this choice, although the sombre dark foliage, and the association of the species with death and melancholy, may have aided the selection.

From the number of trees presently contained in the Avenue of Honour, it would appear likely that further trees were planted after the initial planting to enable the commemoration of additional World War I participants. The avenue was continued along the Darlington Road to the north-east of Mortlake with the addition of some 60 trees, resulting in an avenue of some 146 trees. The avenue was extended again, possibly after World War II, and the avenue grew to a total of about 196 trees.

Name plaques were removed from individual trees in the World War I section in 2011 and replaced with granite name plaques.

KEY REFERENCES USED TO PREPARE ASSESSMENT

S Cockerell. 'Summary of the history and state of Australia's Avenues of Honour', unpublished thesis, 2007

J Haddow. 'Avenues of Honour in Victoria', University of Melbourne 1987

J Wadsley Planning and Heritage Consultancy, 'Conservation Management Plan - Ballarat Avenue of Honour and Arch of Victory', prepared for the City of Ballarat, 2014

D Rowe, 'War related heritage in Victoria: a report; Botanic features: Avenues of Honour', Dept Planning and Community Development, Melbourne 2011

Victorian War Heritage Inventory at www.vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/vhd/veterans

National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Database

Context, Moyne Shire Study, 2006

Camperdown Chronicle, 7 August 1919, p 4

Mortlake Dispatch, 29 July 1919, 1 August, 6 August 1919

Personal correspondence with Mr C Proctor, Mortlake Historical Society, 8 October 2014 and Mr M Hampson, RSL Mortlake, 14 October 2014

Plaque Citation

This Avenue of Honour was planted in 1919 by the local community for the Mortlake district with each of the Monterey Cypress representing a local enlisted serviceman or woman. It is one of more than 200 World War I avenues planted in Victoria.

Assessment Against Criteria

Criterion

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is of historical and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history Criterion E Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

Why is it significant?

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is significant at the State level for the following reasons:

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Criterion A]

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is aesthetically significant as an outstanding planting of 191 Monterey Cypress which is an extensive, largely intact and highly distinctive commemorative planting. The uniform planting of densely foliated trees on both sides of the road produces a dramatic and continuous avenue along the north-eastern approach into the town of Mortlake, which contrasts markedly with the pastoral surroundings. The avenue is an impressive and imposing visual and cultural landmark and a key landscape feature of the district. [

Criterion E]

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is also significant for the following reasons, but not at the State level:

The Avenue of Honour, Mortlake is socially significant at a local level for its relationship with the community as a memorial to those who served in World War I and for its continuing commemorative importance. It remains as an indication of the involvement of Victoria's small communities in commemorating the sacrifices of their volunteers, along with the loss and sorrow experienced in small rural areas such as the Mortlake district.

Extent of Registration

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 1995**, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including Heritage Register Number H2342 in the category described as Heritage Place.

Avenue of Honour
Hamilton Highway
Mortlake
Moyne Shire

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2342 encompassing all of the road reserve of Darlington Road (Hamilton Highway), Mortlake, between Old Depot Lane and Mortlake-Ararat Road.

Dated 9 April 2015

TIM SMITH
Executive Director

[Victoria Government Gazette No G14 9 April 2015 p.759]

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>